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ta den Caya Grandi !*

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Diasabra Mei 12, 2012 10:00 am pa 8:00 pm



www.themorningnewsaruba.com • themorningnewsaruba@gmail.com Friday, May 11, 2012

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All killed in Russian plane crash in Indonesia

CIJERUK (AFP) - All of the dozens aboard a Russian Sukhoi passenger jet flying on a sales promotion trip in Indonesia were killed when the plane slammed into a mountain, officials said yesterday.

Rescuers who reached the remote site found bodies scattered near the wreckage of Russia's first post-Soviet civilian plane on the sheer face of Mount Salak, outside the city of Bogor, south of Jakarta.

The twin-engine Superjet 100 vanished from radar screens on Wednesday, 50 minutes into what was meant to be a short flight to show off its capabilities to prospective buyers as Russia tries to rebuild its civilian jet industry.

Reports of the number on board varied. Trimarga Rekata, the company responsible for the doomed flight's guest list, originally said 50 passengers were on board but yesterday revised the number to 45.

Local rescue officials said the plane was carrying 46 peo-

ple. Those aboard were mostly Indonesian aviation representatives, but there were also eight Russians -- four of them crew and four Sukhoi employees -- plus an American and a Frenchman, officials said.

They said a helicopter pilot spotted the plane's debris after rescuers resumed their operation at first light yesterday, locating one part with the Sukhoi logo on the face of Mount Salak, a dormant volcano.

Devastated relatives of those aboard gathered at the Halim Perdanakusuma airport in Jakarta -- used for military and some commercial flights -- where the Sukhoi had taken off the day before.

In Russia, investigators opened a criminal probe into possible misconduct during preparations for the flight.

An investigative committee said it would look at "the procedure for preparing the flight crew and also the technical condition of the craft itself before its departure from Russia".

Aruba Airport reports 2011 a record year for traffic and profits

AAA CEO Peter Steinmetz and Director of Operations Jurgen Benschop welcomed island media for a recap of the figures for 2011, which revealed the Reina Beatrix International Airport is setting new records for processed passengers and astute management.

This report is done annually in the name of transparency, but as Peter Steinmetz commented, "I am particularly proud of my management team for the sharp budgeting practices, reducing expenses by 37%, which has resulted in a 17% profit margin. Most airports only hope for 5% to 10% profit, so we have good reason to be happy with our numbers."

He also pointed out that Benschop, prior to taking over the position of Director of Operations last year, had been invited to the Airport Council International Conference to be elected to the position of Chairman of the Safety Group, a statement to the ACI's admiration for the state of operations and safety at Aruba's airport.

This was the sixth time in 6 years AAA received appreciation from its airline customers for its airline marketing ef-



Peter Steinmetz and Jurgen Benschop surrounded by management team

forts: for the third consecutive year AAA was highly commended and awarded runner-up status in the regional category "The Americas" for Excellence in Airline Marketing during the annual ROUTES conference in Santo Domingo. The consistency that is displayed by AAA, as a relatively small player amongst all American and South and Central American airports in scoring year after year on the shortlist of best airline marketing airports, confirms the company's view on the practice of airline marketing, especially as

prizes are awarded based on information received from the airlines who vote on the most outstanding airports.

The total of aircraft movements grew by 1.3% compared to 2010, for a total of 38,888, which is almost exclusively due to general aviation, an increase of private crafts and other non-commercial flights. Further analysis of the commercial passenger flights segment reveals inbound seat capacity to Aruba grew by 1% from 1,507,108 to 1,529,272 in 2011: (see table below)

Continued on page 2

Seat Capacity Overview 2009-2011

Region	2009	2010	2011	% Diff 2011-2010	% Diff 2011-2009
United States	734,786	751,161	716,902	-5%	-2%
Caribbean	17,217	17,901	14,168	-21%	-18%
Central America	21,212	22,773	23,711	4%	12%
Dutch Caribbean	155,308	222,588	238,442	7%	54%
Canada	18,533	16,188	27,397	69%	48%
Europe	195,177	212,449	218,966	3%	12%
South America	261,037	264,048	289,686	10%	11%
Total	1,403,270	1,507,108	1,529,272	1%	9%

Source: AAA, Mis 2009-2011



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Aruba Airport reports 2011 a record year...

Continued from page 1



South Side Development Plan

The year 2011 ended with the highest traffic numbers ever experienced with total number of passengers processed by the airport (including transfer, transit and general aviation passengers) amounting to 2,087,170 (+5.2%) the highest figure ever. The number of Passenger Facility Charge pay-

ing (departing) passengers ("PFC passengers") increased in total with 5.4% to 998,161 for the full year, making 2011 the best year ever for AAA. The difference between passengers and paying passenger is accounted for by crewmembers, children under 2, diplomats, etc.

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Mr. Steinmetz acceded this positive result was somewhat unexpected, given the sovereign debt crisis in Europe and its fall out effect on other economies. Coupled with the aftereffects of the banking crisis and global economic recession, the results of 2011 surpassed earlier expectations.

As in 2010, a transparent growth trend was absent as traffic growth numbers varied substantially per region; growth for Aruba was predominantly due to growth in the following segments: Latin America & Caribbean and (former) Netherlands Antilles: both increased with 18%. The US market was stagnant with zero growth, whilst Europe grew with almost 4%. The Fixed Base Operation for general aviation (operated by Universal Weather and Aviation, Inc), showed an increase of 5.6% in Revenue Generating Passengers (RGP) to 11,467 passengers in 2011.

AAA's counts of PFC-paying passengers indicate that 59% of total visitors to Aruba on commercial flights are from the USA, which is approxi-



Graph of departing passengers

mately 3 percent points lower than 2010. Latin America remains Aruba's second largest tourism market with 17% of tourism visitors of which Venezuela accounted for 64%.

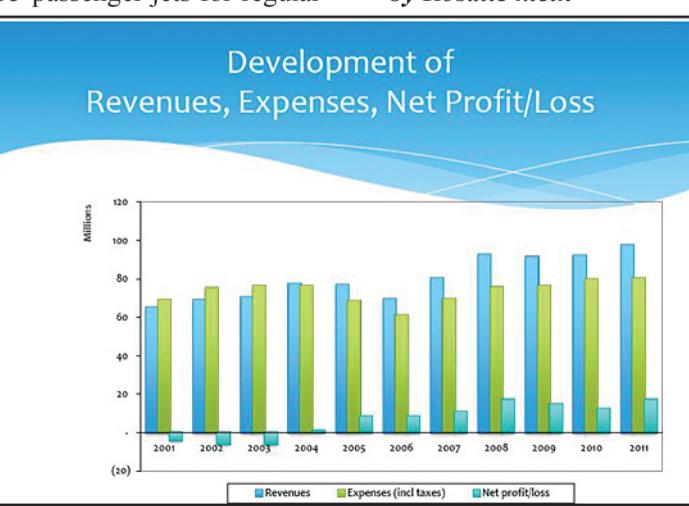
This general positive growth and unprecedented profit in uncertain times has also resulted in the AAA bond issue being upgraded in quality as an investment.

Finally, Jurgen Benschop explained the 44.4 million Aruban florins the airport has committed to improvements in 2012 and their necessity; one of the major issues providing containment space for the enlargement of the native Aruban signature airline Tiara Air Aruba, which has acquired to 155-passenger jets for regular

service to the U.S. and the region. Unlike other airlines, which depart in as short a time as possible, this being Tiara's home base required the construction of hangers adjacent to the south terminal. There are also improvements to the east and west aprons, to maintain U.S. air authority standards for safety and quality.

AAA has also received commendations for their environmental and energy saving practices, one of which is switching to LED runway lights, which consume less energy, and the airport's compliance in regard to being well within safety limits for noise and emission pollution.

by Rosalie klein



Net Profit & Loss chart

Seaport Casino presents

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Mother's Day Edition



Sunday, May 13th 2012

starting from 1 pm at the Renaissance Convention Center

Bingo = AWG 50,- per card of 10 games
Progressive = AWG 3,- per card of 6 games

Game 1.....AWG 1500,-	Game 7..... AWG 3000,-
Game 2.....AWG 1500,-	Game 8..... AWG 3000,-
Game 3.....AWG 1500,-	Game 9..... AWG 5000,-
Game 4.....AWG 1500,-	Game 10 Progresivo from 51 to 54 calls AWG 2000,- at 55 or more calls AWG 1000,-
Game 5.....AWG 1500,-	Game 11 AWG 20.000,-
Game 6.....AWG 3000,-	

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Obligatory Education in Aruba soon to be a reality!



The coordinator of the Bureau of Obligatory Education, Lysiane Dijkhoff-Sammy, reported that all the preparatory work and planning for the introduction of Obligatory Education on Aruba, have been completed. Introduction of this new law will be done in phases. One of the phases was a special

course regarding Obligatory Education that was offered to Police of the Barrios and a group of Civil employees.

On August 15, the government will issue a grand welcome to Obligatory Education at all our schools. Obligatory Education will be initiated in a festive manner with balloons

and much fanfare at all our schools. Members of Parliament and Ministers will be asked to join in with their support to help introduce Obligatory Education in schools across the island, according to Coordinator Lysianne Dijkhoff-Sammy.

Continued on page 4

Special Dia di Mama!

Diadomingo 13 di Mei

Appetizer

- Sopi di Pisca
- Onion Soup
- Balchi di Calco
- Escargot
- Salada

Entrée

- Fresh Catch of the Day
- Jumbo Shrimp
- Filet Mignon 8oz. US Tenderloin
- Grilled Boneless Chicken Breast

Dessert

- Bolo di Chuculati of Banana
- Ice Cream
- Coffee / Tea

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4-course dinner \$25.95 pa persona + 1.5%, No Service Charge!

Kids Menu \$12
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Happy Mother's Day

25th ANNIVERSARY

Horario pa dia di Mama ta 11am - 11 pm
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Renaissance bartenders receive Bacardi training sessions

Tropical Bottling, official agents for Bacardi on Aruba, welcomed Bacardi Brand Masters William Ramos and Juan Coronado for an entertaining and enlightening visit to Aruba this week. The pair often travel to various destinations providing classes for bar and wait staff on the latest developments of Bacardi, the eponymous rum produced by the largest privately held, family-owned spirits company in the world.

Though they produce over 200 fine spirits and wines, they are of course best known for their smooth, light rums. "Bacardi is the most mixable spirit on the rack," explained Juan, a master mixologist, who conducted classes in producing the perfect Mojito, an iconic drink of mint, sugar, lemon and of course, not "rum" as many of his students thought, but "Bacardi," which goes beyond being simply rum.

Two classes were conducted for all the Renaissance employees on Wednesday, May 9,

where they sample six varieties of Bacardi, from pure white Superior, to dark, spicy Oakheart, as William explained the nuances of each label.

Juan took over to demonstrate how to be a mixologist par excellence, not only with classic and frequently ordered cocktails, but two creations of his own, the "Silver Lining" and "Quintessential." The first uses fresh cucumber, Bacardi Superior, sugar and lime juice. "I invented this one day because I like to work with what is handy in my kitchen," he explained to the class.

Continued on page 4



El Gaucho
ARGENTINE GRILL

Mother's Day
3-Course Lunch Special

From 11:30am - 5:30pm and Sunday till 7:00pm

Appetizer: Empanada Argentina or Ceasar Salad
Entree: Skirt Steak or Grilled Seafood Skewer
Dessert: Sorbet or Caramel Flan

\$25,00
+15% service charge and tax

Special 35th Anniversary
ALL DAY • 3-Course Menu

Appetizer
Our Best Selling Sautéed Conch Or Traditional Argentinean Grilled Chorizo y Morcilla

Entree
Argentina's most popular cut, the Skirt Steak
Or Mixta del Mar a sampler of our signature seafood dishes, on the menu since 1977!
Grouper Fillet, Garlic Shrimp & Calamari Buenos Aires

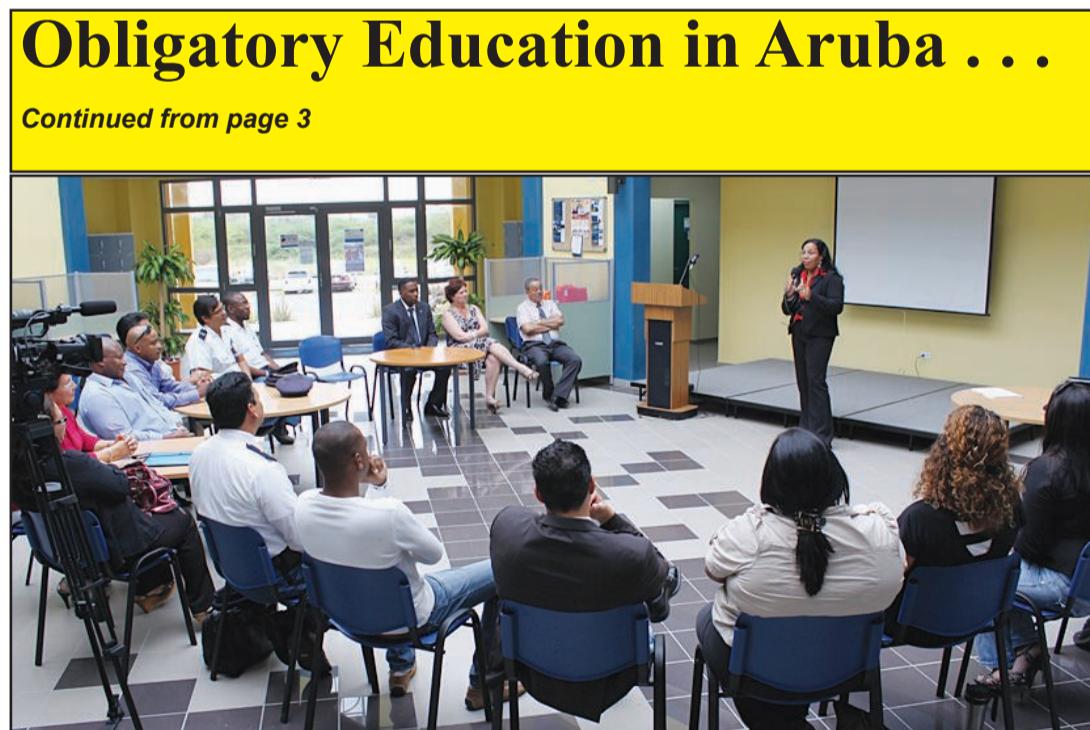
Dessert
A sampler of our most popular homemade Caramel Flan, Crepes and Brownie
A glass of our famous Sangria included, prepared with fresh fruit and Carlo Rossi Burgundy Wine

\$35,00
+15% service charge and tax

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35 Years



The Obligatory Education Bureau already has acquired a number of Civil employees to serve as Obligatory Education civil servants who have already taken a basic course. They also have a social worker with experience

working with young people and in Obligatory Education. Mrs. Dijkhoff-Sammy emphasized that the Obligatory Education Bureau will work in consortium with other institutions which have to do with young people and

obligatory education, such as, the Department of Social Affairs, the Guardianship Council (Voogdijraad), social workers of all schools; and in particular with all schools and school boards.



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If I'm wrong, you correct me.
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Renaissance bartenders receive ..

Continued from page 3



Juan conducts an entertaining and enlightening class

"It is not my way of working to seek out some rare and exotic ingredient to create an enjoyable drink. Creative bartenders are also turning to culinary practices and ingredients more in devising interesting new ways to use liquors. Rum is the most mixable of spirits and particularly lends itself well for this. Bacardi was the first to develop the filtration and fermentation processes to produce the smooth, enjoyable rums we take for granted today."

He provided the class with a bit of history of rum, particularly as it pertains to Bacardi, which was founded by Facundo Bacardi Masso, a Catalan wine merchant who had emigrated to Cuba, and developed the process that produced the first white rum. He and his brother Jose set up a distillery in 1862 in a building that housed many bats in the rafters, hence the famous Bacardi logo.



The perfect Mojito

Renaissance employees were entertained and enlightened by the training sessions with William and Juan and properly impressed by their thorough knowledge and passion for their product. Customers at the Renaissance bars and restaurants can expect some interesting and delicious new drinks on the menu.

by Rosalie Klein

Hollande in 'frank and friendly' talks with Eurogroup chief



PARIS (AFP) - France's president-elect Francois Hollande yesterday held "frank and friendly" talks with the head of the Eurogroup of finance ministers, Jean-Claude Juncker, Hollande's transition chief said.

Juncker met with Hollande in Paris as the Socialist prepares to take over next week from outgoing leader Nicolas Sarkozy after his election victory Sunday, Hollande's transition chief Pierre Moscovici said.

Hollande and Juncker, also Luxembourg's prime minister, had a "frank and friendly working exchange" during the 70-minute meeting, Moscovici said.

Hollande is facing resistance from many in Europe to his plan to reopen talks on the European Union's hard-won fiscal austerity pact in order to refocus the EU's economic policy on growth.

"Mr Juncker is a man who is very open to listening to Francois Hollande's ideas and who knows that the focus must be on growth," Moscovici said.

Hollande met Wednesday with EU president Herman Van Rompuy for talks in Paris also focused on economic growth.

Several French official sources said yesterday that Hollande will fly to Berlin within hours of his swearing-in ceremony on May 15 for talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel -- Europe's key proponent of fiscal austerity.

Cuba poised to pass gay marriage law

HAVANA (AFP) - Famed sexologist Mariela Castro, daughter of the Cuban president, said yesterday she expected her country this year will pass a same-sex marriage law, although she said Cuba still needs to be "more revolutionary" in its treatment of gays.

Mariela Castro said she "has the hope that this year"

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Rebel attack kills seven police in Colombia

BOGOTA (AFP) - Leftist guerrillas attacked a police garrison with homemade mortars, killing seven personnel and wounding 17 others in northeastern Colombia, civilian and police sources said yesterday.

A police spokesman in Bogota said one rebel was killed and five others captured in the aftermath of the attack, which occurred in a rural area in Norte de Santander, a

province that borders Venezuela.

The wounded police, 12 of whom were in serious condition, were taken to the city of Cucuta on the Venezuelan border for medical attention.

The army said in a statement that it has deployed assault helicopters to the region to mount a counter-attack against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) unit that carried out

the attack.

A second guerrilla group, the National Liberation Army (ELN), and drug trafficking organizations also are active in the area, which has extensive coca cultivation.

The FARC is Colombia's biggest and oldest guerrilla group with an estimated 9,200 fighters, while the ELN has an estimated 3,500 fighters, the Colombian Defense Ministry says.

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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT with "RINCON BOYZ"

Bread Station:
Bread, assorted Muffins, American Pancakes, French toast, Crispy Bacon, Link Sausage, Hash brown.

Omelet Station:
Omelets prepared to order with variety of fillings.

Salad Station:
Caesar & condiments, Potatoes Egg Salad, Tuna Salad, Tricolor Pasta Salad, Chicken Salad.

Gourmet Entrees:
Tenderloin with Mushroom sauce; Chicken Cordon Blue with white wine sauce; Grouper with Creole sauce; Fresh mixed vegetables, White Rice, Fried Plantain, Pan Bati.

Dessert Station:
Assortment of Cakes, Pastries, Quesillo and Pan Boyo
Beverage: Unlimited Champagne and Orange Mimosa, Juices, Coffee and Tea.

Children 6-12 years US\$ 14.50; Under 6 years eat free.
Prices are inclusive service charge and BBO
For reservation please call: 526-7714
EARLY reservations are entitled to participate in a raffle to win a weekend stay with us.
(NOTE: Last reservation date is May 6, 2012)



Top US lawmakers mum on political impact of gay marriage

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US congressional leaders from both parties yesterday declined to predict the political fallout of what is certain to be a 2012 campaign issue: President Barack Obama's public support of gay marriage.

With the presidential election less than six months away, the political world lit up when Obama became the first US president to publicly support same sex marriage, with both sides debating how his announcement will play out in the campaign.

But when asked how Obama's same sex marriage support may help or hurt his re-election bid and the campaigns of Republicans and Democrats in the Senate and House of Representatives, congressional leaders balked.

"The president can talk about it all he wants. I'm going

to stay focused on what the American people want us to stay focused on, and that's jobs," House Speaker John Boehner told reporters when asked how the issue would impact the 2012 race.

Boehner reiterated his own personal position on the matter -- which happens to match that of Republican presumptive presidential nominee Mitt Romney: "I believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman," the speaker said.

He declined to take a firm position on efforts by some of his Republican House colleagues who recently voted to ban gay marriage from taking place on US military bases.

The Hill reported that members of the House Armed Services Committee inserted the measure, crafted by Republican Representative Steve Palazzo,

into its version of the defense authorization bill for 2013.

House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi stressed that while she was a strong supporter of gay rights and Obama's statement was "the right thing to do for our country," the political ramifications were secondary.

"What he did was to advance the cause for civil rights in such a personal as well as presidential way. It's more important than any political consequences," she said.

In particular Pelosi declined to make predictions on how the announcement might impact members of the African-American community, notably some religious groups which are adamantly opposed to same sex marriage, or Democratic fundraising efforts.

"Anything about the politics is incidental," she said.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

30,000 police march as British public sector workers strike

LONDON (AFP) - More than 30,000 off-duty police officers marched through London yesterday and hundreds of thousands of British public sector workers went on strike over the government's austerity measures.

Immigration staff, civil servants, health workers, lecturers and prison officers also took part in the 24-hour strike, the latest in a series of stoppages since the coalition government came to power two years ago.

Police officers from all 43 forces in England and Wales donned black baseball caps emblazoned with the words "Cuts are criminal" as they protested in London against the spending cuts and changes to their pay and pensions.

The police, who under British law are banned from holding strikes, warned that the government's push to cut a record deficit was putting public safety at risk.

Police Federation chairman Paul McKeever said in a speech: "We care very deeply about the communities that we serve. We have seen what happens when we have a government that has given policing a very low priority.

"If you are cutting our jobs, then you are cutting the service we can deliver and the public's safety is at risk."

London's Metropolitan Police said more than 32,000 police took part in the march.

The government says the current pension provisions are unfair and unsustainable because people are living longer.

But trade unions say the plans will force their members to pay more and work longer for lower pensions.

Unions said more than 400,000 people were on strike, but Francis Maude, the Minister for the Cabinet Office, said the figure was "wildly inaccurate" and only about 150,000 civil servants had taken part in the "futile" action.

Maude said: "The combination of the dedicated majority of public service workers who came to work as usual and our rigorous contingency plans ensured that public services were mainly unaffected.

"It is now time that union leaders put the best interests of their members first by asking them to accept our generous offer."

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The Indian Grill House

Special For Mothers Day

\$25.00 p/p

Special Buffet

Appetizer

Chicken Tandoori
Batter fried Grouper
Samosa

Dessert

Gulab Jamun
Rice Kheer

Entree

Lamb curry

Shrimps Curry

Grouper in cilantro sauce

Chicken in Coconut Sauce

Navrattan Korma

Haryali Kofta

Dal Makhani

Kashmiri Pulao (Rice)

Naan (Indian Bread)

Sunday May 13, 2012
Time : 11:00am - 3:00pm

Tandoor, South Beach Center, Palm Beach, Tel 5860944

International News

Ex-judge denounces corruption in Venezuelan regime

MIAMI (AFP) - A former supreme court justice Wednesday charged that top Venezuelan military and political leaders are involved in drug trafficking and that the judicial system is used to jail opponents of ailing President Hugo Chavez.

"President Chavez should know that there are drug traffickers among his favorite generals," Luis Velasquez Alvaray said in an interview with Miami-based SoiTV.

Velasquez was interviewed in Costa Rica where he sought asylum after being charged with corruption in Venezuela.

He is the second former supreme court judge to flee to Costa Rica and make public accusations against the Chavez regime in interviews with the television station in the past month.

Eladio Aponte, the other judge, was later flown to the United States where he was reported to be cooperating with

Kony will be captured or killed in 2012: ICC prosecutor

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Lord's Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony will be captured or killed this year, the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor said Thursday.

Luis Moreno-Ocampo added that the "Kony 2012" video, produced by the Invisible Children advocacy group and viewed nearly 100 million times online, forever changed a conflict that has raged since the late 1980s in relative obscurity.

"We reached a complete new generation," following the 28-minute video's release, said Moreno-Ocampo, who in 2005 secured an arrest warrant for Kony and four of his top deputies, two of whom have since died.

"Kony will be arrested or killed before the end of this year," the Argentinian Moreno-Ocampo told journalists, without specifying why he felt the elusive rebel leader would finally be found.

Kony launched his rebellion in northern Uganda more than two decades ago but has since been chased to the jungles of neighbouring central African states.

the US Drug Enforcement Administration.

Velasquez Alvaray charged that top generals formed part of a drug trafficking cartel called "Los Soles."

He also accused former vice president Jose Vicente Rangel of running a network of corrupt judges, magistrates and prosecutors that imprisoned opponents of the regime and took bribes for favorable decisions in other cases.

"The judiciary is penetrated by the drug trade," he said.

The accusations come amid growing political uncertainty in Venezuela over Chavez's health and a strong election challenge by a youthful governor, Henrique Capriles, who has united the opposition behind his candidacy.

Chavez this week underwent what he said would be his last radiation treatment in Cuba after two surgeries to remove cancerous tumors and rounds of chemotherapy.

In December 2008, Uganda led a US-backed offensive on LRA camps in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, but Kony escaped and his small band of fighters scattered around the vast jungle region.

US President Barack Obama has sent 100 special forces to the region to assist the Ugandan, Congolese, Central Africa and South Sudanese troops hunting for Kony and the remnants of the LRA.

Ocampo was speaking at one of his last public engagements before leaving his post at The Hague-based court, with Fatou Bensouda, a Gambian, set to take over as chief prosecutor next month.

The Kony 2012 video was criticised by some, in part for oversimplifying the root causes of the LRA's devastating insurgency, but Ocampo applauded it for raising awareness about the conflict to unprecedented levels.

Kony is wanted by the ICC for rape, mutilation and the murder of civilians, as well as abducting and forcibly recruiting children to serve as child soldiers or sex slaves.

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Kony launched his rebellion in northern Uganda more than two decades ago but has since been chased to the jungles of neighbouring central African states.

May 13, 2012 - 11 am - 2 pm

Mothers Day

BRUNCH MENU

Breakfast Station

- Resort Baked Breakfast Breads and Pastries to include Pound Cake, Banana Bread, Assorted Muffins and Danish
- Tropical Fresh Fruits
- Fluffy Scrambled Eggs
- Crisp Bacon & Link Sausages
- Caribbean Breakfast Potatoes
- Omelets prepared to order with a Variety of Fillings

Soup Station

- Seafood Chowder

Salad Station

- Caesar and Condiments
- Watermelon and Feta Cheese Salad
- Red Beet Salad
- Potato Egg Salad
- Antipasto Salad
- Waldorf Chicken Salad
- Tomato Basil Salad and Extra Virgin Oil

Seafood Station

- Aruban Seafood Salad Ceviche with Shrimp, Scallops, Local Fish, Cilantro and Lime
- Display of Peel 'N Eat Shrimp with Cocktail Sauce and Lemon Wedges
- Display of Smoked Salmon, Bagels and Cream Cheese

Carving Station

- Beef Tenderloin crusted with Larimar Herbs, Horseradish Pesto Cream and Au Jus

Gourmet Entrees

- Local Favorite Keshi Yena
- Grouper with Creole sauce
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White House not disappointed by Putin no-show

(AFP) - The White House insisted Thursday it was not disappointed that Russian President Vladimir Putin will skip the G8 summit and talks with President Barack Obama next week.

The Russian leader, returned as president after a four year break Monday, and was expected to have a first chance to meet on a president-to-president level with Obama at the Camp David summit in Maryland.

But Putin said in a phone call with Obama Wednesday that he would not be able to attend as he was tied up with picking his cabinet and would send ex-president and current Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev instead.

"It is something we understood and understand," he said, noting that Putin and Obama had already agreed to meet "in not much time at all" at the G20 summit in Mexico

in June said White House spokesman Jay Carney.

Carney also dismissed the idea that Putin had decided not to come because it is doubtful Obama will travel to the APEC summit in Vladivostock, Russia in September as it takes place less than two

months before the US election.

Putin's visit to the United States was to come at a prickly time in ties with Washington, which is pressing ahead with a European missile shield despite Russian complaints and has also slammed Russia's treatment of protestors.



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Health & Living

Argentina lawmakers approve sexual identity law



BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Argentina's Senate has passed a law allowing transvestites and transgendered people to choose how their sex is reported in legal documents, including identification cards, drivers' licenses and passports.

The bill -- approved late Wednesday by the upper chamber on a 55-0 vote, with one abstention -- had been previously approved by the House of Deputies in November.

The measure allows someone born as one gender, but

who lives or identifies as another, to take the steps to achieve legal recognition of their sexual identity choice with a minimum of red tape.

It recognizes gender identity as "an internal and individual state of being that is determined by how each person feels, and may or may not correspond to the gender into which an individual is born," the wording of the bill read.

Once the new law goes into effect it no longer will be necessary for an individual who

has changed their sexual identity to petition a court to change their legal documents to reflect that fact.

And an adult will now be able to officially change his or her gender, image and birth name without having to first undergo a sex change operation or hormone treatments, as required in some other countries.

Supporters said they viewed the measure as a question of fundamental human rights.

"The people in the 'trans' community deserve a society which identifies them and treats in accordance with how they perceive themselves," said Cesar Cigliutti, president of the Homosexual Community of Argentina, an independent group.

Predominantly Catholic Argentina was the first country in Latin America to allow same sex marriage, after the passage of a federal law in 2010.

Sofia sets out to collar stray dogs



SOFIA (AFP) - Sofia's city council adopted a new programme Thursday aimed at

halving the stray dog population by 2014 through stricter controls including mass castrations.

The ambitious plan follows the April death of an elderly university professor who was violently mauled by a pack of 25 dogs in the Bulgarian capital, sparking an outcry and intensified calls for massive culls.

Stray dogs number about 9,500 in city of two million people, according to data from the council, which has blamed owners who abandon their pets' offspring and people who feed strays for the increasing

numbers.

The new programme, which aims to cut the number of strays by 95 percent in 2016, will involve intensifying existing measures such as mass castrations, as well as encouraging adoptions.

Only sick and aggressive animals will be put down, the council decided, despite numerous calls for relaxing culling rules following the professor's death.

Other measures that will be strengthened include anti-rabies vaccinations, earmarks to keep track of the stray animals, and stricter controls and fines for people who feed them.

The council also said it was ready to provide land to animal rights groups wishing to fund and run shelters.

Animal rights groups have accused the city of failing to curb corruption in castration procedures and failing to enforce regulations requiring the registration of all pets.

The dog problem did not exist under communism, when strays were regularly culled, but their number grew out of proportion with dire economic times following the regime change in 1989, with up to 20,000 dogs roaming the streets of Sofia in 1997.

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EU official urges leaders to follow Obama on gay marriage

BRUSSELS (AFP) - More European leaders should take inspiration from US President Barack Obama and back gay marriage, the European Union's home affairs commissioner said on Thursday.

Cecilia Malmstroem praised Obama on Twitter after the US leader's "important statement" in favour of same-sex marriage.

Asked by AFP whether EU leaders should follow Obama's example, she wrote on the micro-blogging website: "Definitely, I believe that a couple who is in love should be able to marry all over Europe, no matter if they're straight or gay."

"Obama is showing strong leadership on this issue," she added.

Same-sex marriage is legal

in five of the EU's 27 nations: Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and the Netherlands, which was the first country in the world to legalise gay weddings 11 years ago.

Other EU nations offer different forms of civil unions for same-sex couples.

In a US television interview on Wednesday, Obama abandoned his earlier position that he was "evolving" on gay marriage to come out in full support of marriage equality.

The stance is risky ahead of the presidential election in November as the sudden injection of a divisive moral-social question could hit Obama's prospects in battleground states that he needs to win.

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

Sci-Tech

US gives Zambia \$355 mln for water projects

LUSAKA (AFP) - Zambia signed a deal Thursday with the United States for a grant worth over almost \$355 million to improve water and sanitation in the cholera-plagued capital city, Lusaka.

"The United States will

fund the project over five years through its Millennium Challenge Corporation, which invests in major projects in countries with a record of good governance. Cholera and other waterborne diseases are rife in Zambia

because of poor water supply and dilapidated drainage systems.

Lusaka's two-million-strong population frequently experience water shortages slums and water-rationing in plush residential areas.



CZECH REPUBLIC, PRAGUE : Greenpeace activists dressed in polar bear costumes and others holding banners stage a protest on May 10, 2012 on the roof of a Shell petrol station in Prague, against the heading of the an icebreaker for Shell's Arctic oil drilling project in the north of Alaska. Environmentalists have pointed to the vastly complicated task of drilling in the harsh Arctic environment, the difficulty of effectively cleaning up any spills in such conditions, and the risks posed to wildlife and native communities in the region's fragile ecosystem.

AFP PHOTO

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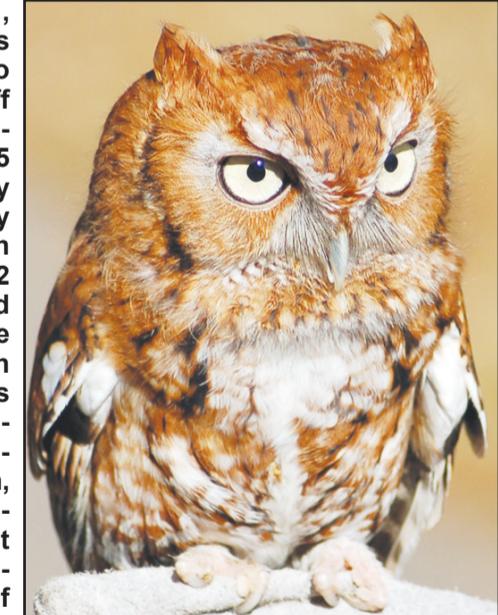
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MELBOURNE, Australia : This handout photo taken by Jeff Whitlock on December 10, 2005 and released by The University Of Melbourne on May 10, 2012 shows a red morph of the eastern screech owl (Megascops asio). The University of Melbourne research, published in 'Nature', found that birds with multiple versions of their colour patterns evolved into new species more quickly than those with uniform plumage.

AFP PHOTO

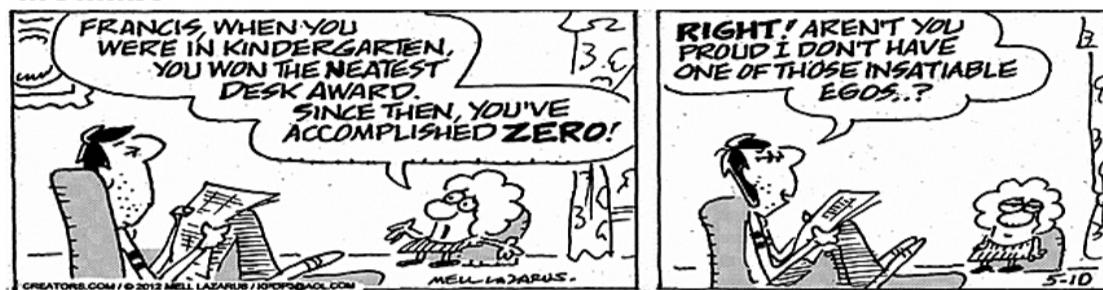
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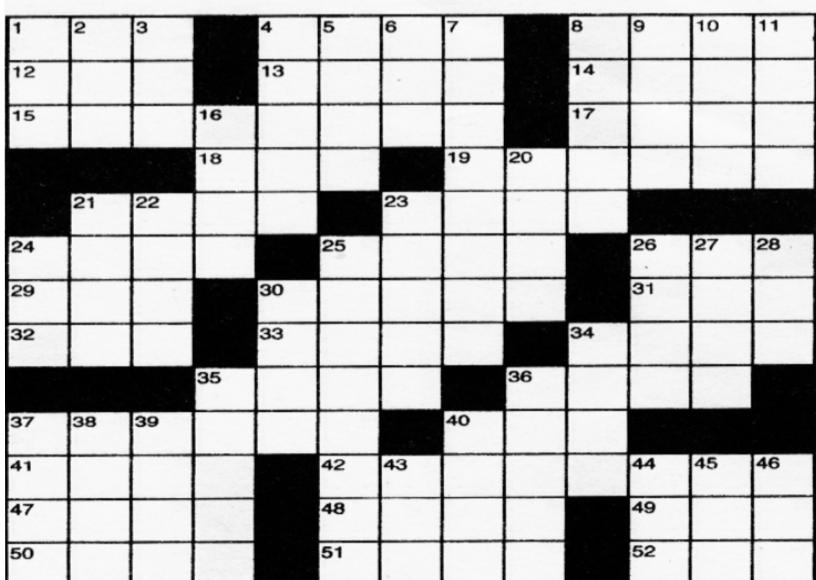
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ACROSS

1. Time div.
4. Easy task
8. Melville captain
12. Turmoil
13. Will beneficiary
14. Coherent
15. Bandleader Guy
17. Strip of wood
18. Find a total
19. Robberies
21. Tyne of "Cagney & Lacey"
23. Fixed charges
24. Sushi bar drink
25. Theater box
26. Hong Kong

29. Jackie O's second husband
30. Heaped up
31. Lab rodent
32. Dawson or Cariou
33. Requests permission
34. Requested to come
35. Cavities
36. Actress Skye
37. Passively obedient
40. Dancer Miller
41. Golf club
42. Moniker
47. Reporter's



8. Beasts of burden
9. Fifty percent
10. Med. school course
11. Speculates
16. Large bundle
20. Pay attention
21. Challenge
22. Similar
23. Relatives
24. Bando or Maglie
25. Auditor
26. Actress Drescher
27. Put on cargo
28. Colorado Indian
30. Sandbox item
34. Former West German capital
35. Spotted pony
36. Readied the presses
37. Youngster's claim
38. Popular Nabisco cookie
39. Brat's stocking stuffer
40. Developer's unit
43. Follower of (suffix)
44. Swiss mountain
45. Bombshell West
46. Telepathy (abbr.)

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A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

5	3	1	7	9	2	4	6	8	1	3	5
9	4	1	3	5	7	6	8	2	1	7	9
2	8	6	9	1	3	4	5	7	3	6	4
3	5	4	8	7	9	2	1	6	5	7	8
1	7	9	2	4	5	8	6	3	1	5	4
4	6	9	3	7	5	2	8	4	6	1	2
5	1	5	7	3	9	2	4	8	6	3	7
6	9	3	1	5	7	4	2	8	6	1	2
7	2	7	5	6	4	3	1	9	8	5	3

FINANCE

US trade gap swells on record imports

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US trade deficit rose sharply in March as imports hit an all-time high, suggesting solid demand in the steadily growing but modest economic recovery, official data showed yesterday.

The Commerce Department reported the US trade gap widened to \$51.8 billion in March, led by a five percent surge in imports. The March trade shortfall was slightly bigger than analysts' average estimate of \$50.2 billion.

But analysts pointed to the broad-based rise in imports as a positive signal of momentum in the world's largest economy, where consumer spending accounts for about 70 percent of activity.

"Imports have risen in four of the past five months, an indication of sturdy domestic demand," said Ryan Sweet at Moody's Analytics.

Robert Brusca, chief economist at FAO Economics, agreed. "The trade number now puts last month's weak import figure behind us and makes it look more like domestic de-

mand is growing," Brusca said.

The February gap was revised higher to \$45.4 billion from a first estimate of \$46.0 billion.

Choppy trade at the beginning of the year was mainly due to China's lunar new year celebrations, which dramatically lowered Chinese imports to the United States in February.

Excluding China, the number-one exporter to the United States, the March trade deficit would have been more stable.

Petroleum imports also were volatile in the first quarter: less than \$30 billion in February and more than \$36 billion in January and March.

US trade in March set new records, the Commerce Department said. Imports hit an all-time high of \$238.6 billion, and exports were at \$186.8 billion.

US goods and services exports through the first quarter of 2012 were up 8.2 percent or \$41.6 billion from the same period of 2011 to reach \$549.2 billion. The March number marked the fourth consecutive month of export growth.

Daily Exchange Rates

Current as of: 05/10/2012

	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.76	1.78	1.80
Britain	GBP	2.81	2.86	2.92
Switzerland	CHF	192.01	192.73	193.53
Netherlands	EUR	228.75	230.84	233.16
Sweden	SEK	24.82	25.54	26.34
Denmark	DKK	30.09	30.81	31.61
Norway	NOK	29.58	30.30	31.10
Japan	JPY	221.42	223.45	225.69
(per 100)				

All rates for amounts up to AWG 100.00 per item.

Aruba Bankers Association has new Board

Just recently, the Aruba Bankers Association (ABA) elected a new Board of directors. This year ABA will be presided by Marcelline Richardson, Managing Director of Aruba Bank NV. The outgoing President, Javier Wolter of Caribbean Mercantile Bank NV will function as Vice-President, and Pierre Rafini of RBC Royal Bank (Aruba NV) will be the new Treasurer of the Association. Aruba Bankers Association is the organization which represents all the local commercial banks with the goal of protecting their interests.

In view of the global developments and the changes in the needs of the community in general, the Association's plans for the future will include becoming more involved in the daily life of our community. They intend to actively inform the community regarding economic and financial developments that affect our community, and in doing so, contribute to a healthy development of our economy. The Association is convinced that much can be accomplished when all the



L.-r.: Pierre Rafini, Marcelline Richardson and Javier Wolter.

banks work together in unity.

For the Association, another matter of importance is the educating of our community concerning banking services. ABA will be investigating and exploring ways to assist and guide their clients more efficiently in making their financial decisions. The Association has an important role to play in the economic development of the island.

France loses 4.5 bn euro tax case on investment funds

LUXEMBOURG (AFP) - The European Court of Justice yesterday ruled against France over discriminatory tax treatment of foreign investment funds that one paper says could cost Paris 4.5 billion euros.

Foreign investment funds must pay withholding tax of 25% on dividends from investments in securities in French companies, while similar French-based investment funds are exempt.

The court said the French tax provisions "constitutes a re-

striction on the free movement of capital, in principle prohibited by" European treaties.

It added that there was no valid argument for the differential treatment of foreign and resident investors.

According to the French business daily Les Echos the decision could cost the French state some 4.5 billion euros (\$5.8 billion) in reimbursements of withholding taxes already paid according to estimations provided by Paris to the court.

ABA has indicated that their bank executives are willing and prepared to offer advice to the government whenever this is necessary.

The Association has embarked on preparing a platform from which they can make information readily available and easily assessable to all interested parties. For this reason they plan to create a website, where among others, there could be an interchange of ideas with the community in different formats. More information about this project is forthcoming.

The new Board of ABA believes that to achieve their goals, they will need the structural support of the community.

For this reason they intend to employ a professional to develop these ideas. The primary task of such an executive will be to work very closely with all concerns with a constant focus on security, compliance and corporate governance.

The new Board expressed words of gratitude for the able leadership of Javier Wolter who served as President of the Association, and they were pleased to welcome incoming President Marcelline Richardson and wished her much success in her new role.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

ALI	DANZA	ODE
AID	OCEAN	NON
REL	GRANT	TED
PUERTO	YEAH	
BABE	SPEAR	
ORIGAMI	TARO	
SHH	STANS	INC
ANAT	SINCERE	
DOPES	LOOM	
SEEP	VOTERS	
IDO	MADAT	MAE
AND	IRATE	MIA
NAY	SEDER	ALS

Arab media struggle to adapt to new-found freedom



DUBAI (AFP) - Caught out by last year's Arab Spring uprisings, the region's media are still coming to terms with their new-found freedom from the strong-arm tactics of now toppled dictators, participants in a Dubai conference say.

"Turmoil, chaos, change... words that perfectly capture the situation in the Arab world and media over the past 18 months," said Maryam Bin Fahd, executive director at the Dubai Press Club, speaking at the Arab Media Forum that wrapped up on Wednesday.

The conference, attended by nearly 3,000 people and organised by the Dubai Press Club, provoked heated debate among the representatives of an industry at the centre of sweeping changes in the region after decades of repression.

"The Arab media is trying to find its way after this 180-degree about turn," said Nabil al-Khatib, editor-in-chief at Al-Arabiya news channel.

"Many journalists were used to receiving orders from information ministers in their countries on the coverage of events, and suddenly they found themselves free," he told AFP.

Art Nouveau gem unveiled in Prague after 84 years



PRAGUE, Czech Republic : A man looks at the "Slav Epic", a cycle of 20 allegories tracing the history of the Slavic people and inspired in part by mythology, by Art Nouveau Czech artist Alfons Mucha, at the National Gallery in Prague on May 10, 2012. "The Slav Epic" by Alfons Mucha, a Czech Art Nouveau gem, went on display in Prague today, fulfilling the wish of the artist who spent 18 years on the series of paintings from 1910 to 1928.

AFP PHOTO

and the shock of change."

But in countries where protests are ongoing, notably Syria, the authorities have tightened their media policies, participants said, forcing news channels to find new ways of covering the unfolding events.

The Saudi-owned network, and above all Qatar's Al-Jazeera, played a key role in the Arab uprisings that began in Tunisia in late 2010.

In a survey published by the conference organisers, 72 percent of those participating thought satellite news channels had contributed to the Arab Spring.

Senior staffers at those channels deny taking advantage of the uprisings, insisting that they have tried to report events on the ground as accurately as possible.

Many at the conference also questioned whether it was possible to provide objective or impartial coverage of the tumultuous events in the region given the alternate risk of upsetting the public by not openly siding with the revolt.

Internet sites such as Facebook, Twitter and You Tube, which have played such a key role in the Arab uprisings, have changed the media landscape and are "restructuring traditional journalism," according to participants.

Social networks that have given rise to so-called citizen journalism are a window with which to "mislead public opinion," argued Amr Khafagi, editor-in-chief of the Egyptian Shorouq daily.

But for Nakhle El Hage, Al-Arabiya's news director, "they can hold a treasure of information, (although) they are a land filled with mines."

In countries where mass protests succeeded in toppling long-standing regimes, the new authorities are still finding their way, Tunisia's Minister of Culture Al-Mahdi Mabrouk told the conference.

"You cannot expect to go from a media of propaganda to an independent media in just a few months, such a transition takes time," Mabrouk said.

"In due course, the media will find a voice that is unbiased and fair," he added, during a session entitled "Arab media

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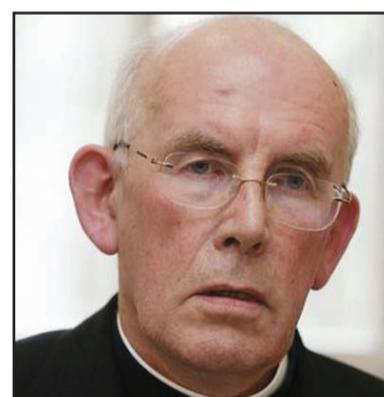
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'Unhealthy' Irish church hopes for renewal amid scandal



Cardinal Sean Brady

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - The Archbishop of Dublin said Thursday that an upcoming international congress in Ireland will give a divided and unhealthy church a chance to reform amid fresh allegations over child abuse.

The Eucharistic Congress in June will reflect "a church which has faced and still faces enormous challenges, but... is alive and vital and anxious to set out on a path to renewal," Diarmuid Martin told a Vatican briefing.

Martin's comments came amid a serious backlash in Ireland against the head of the country's Roman Catholic Church, Cardinal Sean Brady, following accusations in a television documentary that he had failed as a young priest to report abuse.

Martin refused to comment on Brady's situation, but insisted that the congress would not be overshadowed by the scandal, saying: "the overall challenge is not just about sex abuse, it goes much deeper."

"There are divisions within the Irish Church and at times unhealthy divisions," he said, adding: "we need a much deeper reform in the church."

One of the institution's weaknesses was that it had been unaware of a creeping secularisation and had become "a minority church," he said.

However, he insisted: "it is not an irrelevant church... and should not only be associated with problems."

Calls for Brady to resign came from across the political spectrum in Ireland earlier this month after it emerged he interviewed abused children in 1945 but informed his superiors rather than the police, leaving the paedophile at large.

The Republic of Ireland, a predominantly Catholic country, has been rocked by a number of landmark reports on child sex abuse stretching back decades, and on Church leaders' complicity in covering it up.

Catholics from all over the world are expected to attend

the congress from June 10 to 17, a formal celebration of Mass and a forum for reform debate in the context of the 50th anniversary of the birth of the Second Vatican Council.

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NEWS SHOW

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Adorable and affordable; 5 Burgers Aruba offers an island twist to the great American Burger

Expatriates from Boston, Massachusetts, residing on Aruba, Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. Some may be quite well acquainted with a nationally known U.S franchise bearing the name "5", and patrons can expect the same great quality between the buns, but an expanded menu and Rosie and Aaron's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu.



Rosie and Aaron love their Burger too



Gouda Burger 2

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," comments Aaron; and upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers—the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

Prices vary only slightly between regular and small (basically 2 patties or 1) with specialty items such as Gouda Burger, Farmer's Burger, Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with crispy onion rings and BBQ sauce. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jalapeño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato... whatever the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries, which are made from hand-cut fresh

Idaho potatoes, is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!" Try them the English way—with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

If you are a fan of crispy friend onion rings, as we are at THE MORNING NEWS, you cannot leave there without trying their secret recipe batter-dipped gourmet rings, made from fresh, not frozen onions. Unquestionably, the best we have had anywhere, and for those that like a little spice, the fried jalapeños are a real treat. Aaron and Rosie have expanded their menu to accommodate certain tastes and dietary needs; they offer a tasty grilled chicken sandwich as well.

5 Burgers Aruba is open for lunch & dinner – daily hours are Noon to 10-ish; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for the owners when things are not too busy, to sit and chat while sharing their knowledge of the island. Totally yummy and fun plus a great deal for a quality burger, they are definitely worth a visit.

Gold Coast Aruba: Great savings for large families on holiday rentals



Aruba's newest and most innovative gated community has enjoyed steady sales since breaking ground, as many are finding the secure surroundings and outstanding amenities are just what they were looking for before considering purchasing property on the island. Some owners are using the villas or town homes as vacation retreats rather than full time and are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," noted Gold Coast developer Fito Croes. To assist in the demand for more complete facilities for groups and families, famed hotelier Ed Malone has been placed in charge of the rental program.

Staying at Gold Coast is a very attractive proposition for those traveling with groups that would require multiple hotel rooms. Two and three bedroom Villas or Town Homes accommodate large numbers and offer extensive amenities along with a final cost resulting in considerable savings. The community is minutes to the best beaches and all the casino action, and offers a quiet and secluded getaway with two swimming pools and specialized services with more on the way, such as a fitness room, tennis courts and mini-mall. Ed can arrange maid service, babysitters, caterers, airline pick-up

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EURO 2012 - POLAND - UKRAINE

June 8 - July 1



Advocaat with one-year deal

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Dutch coach Dick Advocaat, who will leave his post as coach of the Russian national team after Euro 2012, on Thursday signed a one-year deal to take over at former club PSV Eindhoven.

Advocaat will replace Philip Cocu, who had been acting as caretaker since Fred

Rutten was sacked in March. Ernest Faber will be his assistant, with Cocu coaching the club's reserve team.

During his first spell in charge at the Philips Stadion, Advocaat won the Dutch Cup in 1996 and the Eredivisie title in 1997.

Nicknamed the 'Little General' Advocaat had a brief spell

in charge of Belgium's national team between October 2009 and April 2010.

In May 2010 he became Russia coach, leading them to this summer's European Championship in Poland and Ukraine, where they will face Greece, Czech Republic and Poland in Group A.

Bilic to quit after Euro 2012

ZAGREB (AFP) - Croatia coach Slaven Bilic said here on Thursday he will quit as national coach after Euro 2012 in Poland and the Ukraine.

"I will conclude my story (as Croatia coach) with the Euro. This is my last championship," Bilic told journalists after he unveiled his 27-man squad.

Bilic refused to comment on reports that he was negotiating to take over at Russian Premier League side Lokomotiv Moscow.

"The main job is ahead of us. I don't think about what

will happen afterwards but only about this big, sacred goal," the 43-year-old stressed in a reference to the European tournament that kicks off on June 8.

The former Croatian international, who played for Everton and West Ham, took over as national coach in 2006. The following year he became a national hero when Croatia claimed a famous 3-2 at Wembley to deny England a place at Euro 2008.

Croatia eventually ended up fifth and failed to qualify

into the 2010 World Cup finals.

"I'm certainly a better coach then in 2008 but the goal is the same -- to win Euro 2012," he said.

Bilic repeatedly said he believed his side can reach the quarter-finals despite being drawn with defending champions Spain, Italy and Ireland in Group C.

Bilic was a member of the squad that achieved Croatia's biggest success on the international stage as it won a third-place finish at the 1998 World Cup in France.

Croatia unveil provisional 27-man Euro squad - Squad, Lead

ZAGREB (AFP) - Croatia coach Slaven Bilic on Thursday unveiled a provisional 27-man squad for Euro 2012 and said he was still counting on the recovery of injured stars Niko Kranjcar and Dejan Lovren.

"Due to the fact that some players who should have been ready for the Euros are either not yet fully fit or are still injured, we decided to name a few more players, to give ourselves more options in every position," Bilic told journalists.

The final 23-man list will be announced either on May 26 or a day later, he added.

Bilic repeatedly said he believes his side can reach the quarter-finals of Euro 2012 despite being drawn with Spain, Italy and the Republic of Ireland in a tricky Group C.

The European Champi-

onship, which runs from June 8 to July 1, is being hosted jointly by Poland and Ukraine.

Those Croatian players whose club seasons have already finished will begin preparations next Wednesday in Catez, Slovenia, before teaming up with the rest of the squad in the northern Adriatic town of Rovinj on May 20, Bilic said.

Croatia will play two friendly matches before the Euros, against Estonia on May 25 in the northern port of Pula and against Norway in Oslo on June 2.

They kick off their European Championship campaign against the Republic of Ireland on June 10 and Bilic believes that match will be crucial to their chances.

Croatia's biggest success on the international stage was a third-place finish at the 1998

World Cup in France.

Provisional squad

Goalkeepers: Stipe Pletikosa (Rostov/RUS), Danijel Subasic (Monaco/FRA), Ivan Kelava (Dinamo Zagreb), Goran Blazevic (Hajduk Split)

Defenders: Jurica Buljat (Maccabi Haifa/ISR), Domagoj Vida (Dinamo Zagreb), Vedran Corluka (Bayer Leverkusen/GER), Josip Simunic (Dinamo Zagreb), Dejan Lovren (Lyon/FRA), Sime Vrsaljko (Dinamo Zagreb), Gordon Schildenfeld (Eintracht Frankfurt/GER), Ivan Strinic (Dnepropetrovsk/UKR), Danijel Pranjic (Bayern Munich/GER)

Midfielders: Darijo Srna (Shakhtar Donetsk/UKR), Tomislav Dujmovic (Real Zaragoza/ESP), Ognjen Vukovic (Dynamo Kiev/UKR), Ivan Rakitic (Sevilla/ESP), Luka Modric (Tottenham/ENG), Ivan Perisic (Borussia Dortmund/GER), Niko Kranjcar (Tottenham/ENG), Milan Badelj (Dinamo Zagreb), Ivo Ilicevic (Hamburg/GER)

Strikers: Ivica Olic (Bayern Munich/GER), Nikica Jelavic (Everton/ENG), Mario Mandzukic (Wolfsburg/GER), Eduardo da Silva (Shakhtar Donetsk/UKR), Nikola Kalinic (Dnepropetrovsk/UKR)

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MLB Standings

American League

East	W	L	Pct	GB
TAMPA	20	11	.645	--
BALTIMORE	19	11	.633	0.5
TORONTO	17	14	.548	3.0
YANKEES	16	14	.533	3.5
BOSTON	12	18	.400	7.5

Central

CLEVELAND	17	13	.567	--
DETROIT	15	15	.500	2.0
CHICAGO	15	17	.469	3.0
KANSAS	11	19	.367	6.0
MINNESOTA	8	22	.267	9.0

West

TEXAS	20	10	.667	--
OAKLAND	16	15	.516	4.5
SEATTLE	15	18	.455	6.5
LA ANGELES	14	18	.438	7.0

National League

East	W	L	Pct	GB
WASHINGTON	18	12	.600	--
ATLANTA	19	13	.594	--
NY METS	18	13	.581	0.5
MIAMI	16	15	.516	2.5
PHILADELPHIA	14	18	.438	5.0

Central

ST. LOUIS	20	11	.645	--
CINCINNATI	16	14	.533	3.5
PITTSBURG	14	16	.467	5.5
HOUSTON	14	17	.452	6.0
CHICAGO	13	18	.419	7.0
MILWAUKEE	13	18	.419	7.0

West

LA DODGERS	20	11	.645	--
SAN FRANCISCO	15	16	.484	5.0
ARIZONA	14	18	.438	6.5
COLORADO	13	17	.433	6.5
SAN DIEGO	11	21	.344	9.5

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Golf: Tiger stumbles to 74 at Players

PONTE VEDRA BEACH (AFP) - Tiger Woods stumbled to a two-over par 74 in his opening round on Thursday at the Players Championship, nine strokes off the pace at the \$9.5 million US PGA event. Woods, a 14-time major champion chasing the record 18 majors won by Jack Nicklaus, opened on the 10th hole with a bogey, finding a greenside bunker and coming up short on a 10-foot par putt.

The former World No. 1, now seventh in the rankings, answered with a birdie from nine feet at the par-3 13th and responded to saving a bogey from 30 feet at the par-4 15th with a 13-foot birdie at the infamous island green 17th hole.

But Woods staggered around the turn with bogeys at the 18th and first and a birdie at the par-5 second negated by a bogey at the par-3 third before he righted the ship and parred his way back to the clubhouse from there.

Woods, who once mastered the par-5 holes with long drives and deadly putting, managed one birdie and three pars on them at the TPC Sawgrass course in round one.

The 36-year-old star, who snapped a 17-month win drought with a victory at Bay Hill in March, came to the Players after his eighth career missed cut at Quail Hollow and was in danger of failing to reach the weekend once again.

Woods won the 2001 Players but has struggled at the course in recent years, withdrawing last year after nine holes with left knee pain and in 2010 he withdrew with 12 holes remaining in the final round due to a neck injury.

This time, Woods was fit



but unable to post a score among the leaders.

Woods has adopted a wait and work attitude about returning to top form after nagging injuries and swing changes.

"Just be patient with it. Just keep plugging along," Woods said. "In the last few months, I've put together some good rounds, won a couple tournaments, so it's there. I just need to continue doing it."

NBA: Thunder's Harden named NBA's top reserve player

NEW YORK (AFP) - James Harden, the first player who came off the bench for the Oklahoma City Thunder most of this season, won the NBA Sixth Man Award as the league's top reserve player, the NBA announced on Thursday.

Harden scored 16.8 points a game, the most of any NBA player not in a starting role, and came off the bench for Oklahoma City in 60 of 62 games he played, helping the Thunder finish 47-19, the third-best record in the league.

Harden received 584 of a possible 595 points, including 115 of 119 first-place votes, from a media panel. He became the first player from the club to win the award.

Philadelphia's Lou Williams, who led the 76ers in scoring with 14.9 points a



game despite not making a single start, was second with 231 points while Jason Terry of Dallas, the 2009 Sixth Man winner, was third on 81 points. Harden averaged 4.1 rebounds and 3.7 assists in 31.4 minutes on the court per game. He hit 49.1 percent of his shots from the field, including 39.0 percent of 3-pointers, and made 84.6 percent of his free throws.

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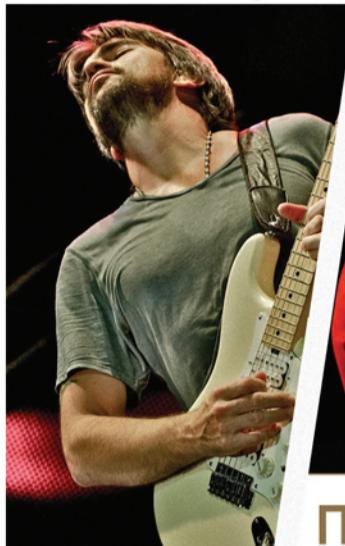
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Verdasco shocks Nadal in Madrid



Spanish Fernando Verdasco celebrates winning against compatriot Rafael Nadal

MADRID -(AFP) - Rafael Nadal went down in frustration as the second seed lost his first match of the season on clay, with Spanish compatriot Fernando Verdasco triumphing 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 on Thursday in the third round of the Madrid Masters.

"I never was in control of the match, I didn't know how to win a point," said Nadal, who intimated he will not show up next year unless the controversial blue clay surface he abhors is modified.

Nadal's perfect record on the dirt for 2012 was marred as Madrid native Verdasco

clawed out the opening set to stun multiple Monte Carlo and Barcelona champion Nadal, who, though he dug out the second set, succumbed in the decider.

Verdasco lost the second set as Nadal found his rhythm, but the 15th-seeded challenger rallied from 1-4 down in the third to work his upset miracle, winning his first match over the king of clay from 14 attempts.

The final set was littered with seven breaks of serve, with a nervous Nadal well off his game and expressing inward and outward frustration

with the surface which has drawn his ire for weeks.

Verdasco applied the pressure in the final game to break Nadal and advance on his second match point, with the winner kissing the surface in gratitude.

"I couldn't close out the match at 5-2. He played better than me," said Nadal, by far the harshest critic of the experimental switch to blue clay.

"The ATP and the tournament can do what they want, I tried my best, I've trained here since Thursday. I was as prepared as I could be.

"I was not good enough to adapt my game to this court. If things continue like this, it will be very sad. "Next year this will be one less event for my calendar."

The devastated number two will need to regroup if he is to regain equilibrium, with next week's Masters 1000 in Rome restoring some normality with a return to classic red clay and sea level altitude.

Nadal last won Madrid in 2010 over Roger Federer and had dominated Verdasco including the loss of just four games in a Barcelona semi-final victory two weeks ago.

The Mallorcan now stands 22-1 on clay since losing in the Rome final last year to Novak Djokovic.

Elsewhere, Czech sixth seed Tomas Berdych ended the injury comeback effort of Frenchman Gael Monfils, the number 12, with a comprehensive 6-1, 6-1 victory.

Monfils was playing for the first time since a March abdominal muscle problem. The flamboyant French player lost serve five times while never earning a break point against Berdych.

Estoril champion Juan del Potro, the tenth seed, beat Croatian Marin Cilic 6-2, 6-4.

In women's play, Serena

Williams staged a recovery at the expense of Caroline Wozniacki as the American reached the quarter-finals 1-6, 6-3, 6-2

The comeback win in 1hr 42min put Williams into a showdown with second seed Maria Sharapova, who earned her last-eight place when opponent Lucie Safarova withdrew before their match with stomach illness.

Williams sleep-walked through the opening set as Denmark's sixth seed had it all her own way in half an hour.

Wozniacki had been bidding for a sixth quarter-final of the season but, having won six titles in 2011, she is still searching for her first of 2012.

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